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NSC BRIEFING 20 January 1955

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OFFSHORE ISLANDS

NSA Declassification/Release Instructions on File.

I. Situation fairly quiet since fall Ichiang
(18 Jan).

A.



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B. Thus, major attacks on any or all
remaining Tachens possible at any time
prior Nationalist evacuation.

II. [Current 7th Fleet plans for evacuation of
two principal Tachens require 5 - 7 days
for job.

A. US would lift 10,000 regulars, 2,300
guerrillas, 14,600 civilians, 10,800
tons supplies and equipment.]

B. Nats would handle minor islands--Yushan
(1,000 guerrillas, 500 civilians);
Pishan (1,800 guerrillas, 1,000
civilians).

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C. Chinats apparently won't clear out

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Nanchishan (85 miles SW main Tachens),
where 2,400 regulars, 650 guerrillas,
2,100 civilians.

III. ChiComs have capability disrupt evacuation.

- A. Could bomb Tachens beaches, US and Nat ships, could also hit ships with subs, torpedo-boats, could lay artillery fire on Tachens and harbor between.
- B. SNIE 100-3-35 (25 Jan) says: "We believe it is unlikely that the Communists would deliberately attack US forces engaged in the evacuation of Nationalist garrisons, but the possibility of a serious incident cannot be excluded."

IV. Elsewhere among offshore islands, ChiComs might move quickly against Matsus--where only 3,000 regulars, 1,200 guerrillas--while US and Nat forces tied up with Tachens lift.

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- move additional naval, air strength into Matsu area before trying assault.
- B. In meantime, expect ChiComs to probe, as test US intentions defend Matsus.
- C. Probing could include attacks on Nat shipping, air harassment, shelling by artillery to north.
- V. As to Quemoy, where Nats have over 50,000 tropps, ChiComs appear unprepared for assault at this time *though increasing artillery positions.*
- A. ChiComs now have about 60,000 tropps in area opposite Quemoy. Would probably want to move in two more armies (100,000); would also want strong air, naval support not now available.
- B. Communists nonetheless expected to test US intentions re Quemoy, as with Matsus.
- C. Such probing could include heavy shell- ing, use of torpedo boats, other craft, or assaults on lightly-held minor

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